



Plex Development; Stabilization of a 15-year-old Application What I Learned

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Plex Track



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Owner, and Sr. Plex Developer.

- Started using Plex in 1996 when hired by Synon, Inc. to learn the Obsydian ARAD Development tool to build applications and train clients in the use of the tool.
- Worked on several client engagements until he acquisition by Sterling Software
- Hired or engaged as a Plex developer bring in knowledge and/or train other developers. Last few years have been consultant on a 15 year old application that has at least 5 years of life, pending a replacement application.

State: When I arrived

- Just after a Major application release with many enhancements and Projects in the release. Outstanding issues and a list of critical bugs fixes. Audit Fields not populating correctly after migration to Plex 6.1
- Overlapping work During transition. Same model, got the fix out, wrong implementation method. I could not update the group model with causing a major conflict. Caused an issue down the road, since the group did not contain my changes.
- Lesson failure of the developer to do a fresh extract after the cut over point with developer.

State: When I arrived

- Also unsure what the group model contained as we still found issues after file changes were made and objects recompiled. UI's reverted back to a previous level. Was the object Gen and Built without the developer updating to the group?
- Build environment. Obtained a Build only machine and only used to build from the group model. Enforces updates to the group model. Previously developer promoted from the development PC.
- Multiple Test Folders – Customized .ini file for a test user pointing to different folders that contained different pieces of development. We moved away to a single folder contains all dll' and pnl's it is updated with latest enhancements or bug fix.

State: When I arrived

- The Application was the last to be enhanced and was often the lagging development effort on a project.

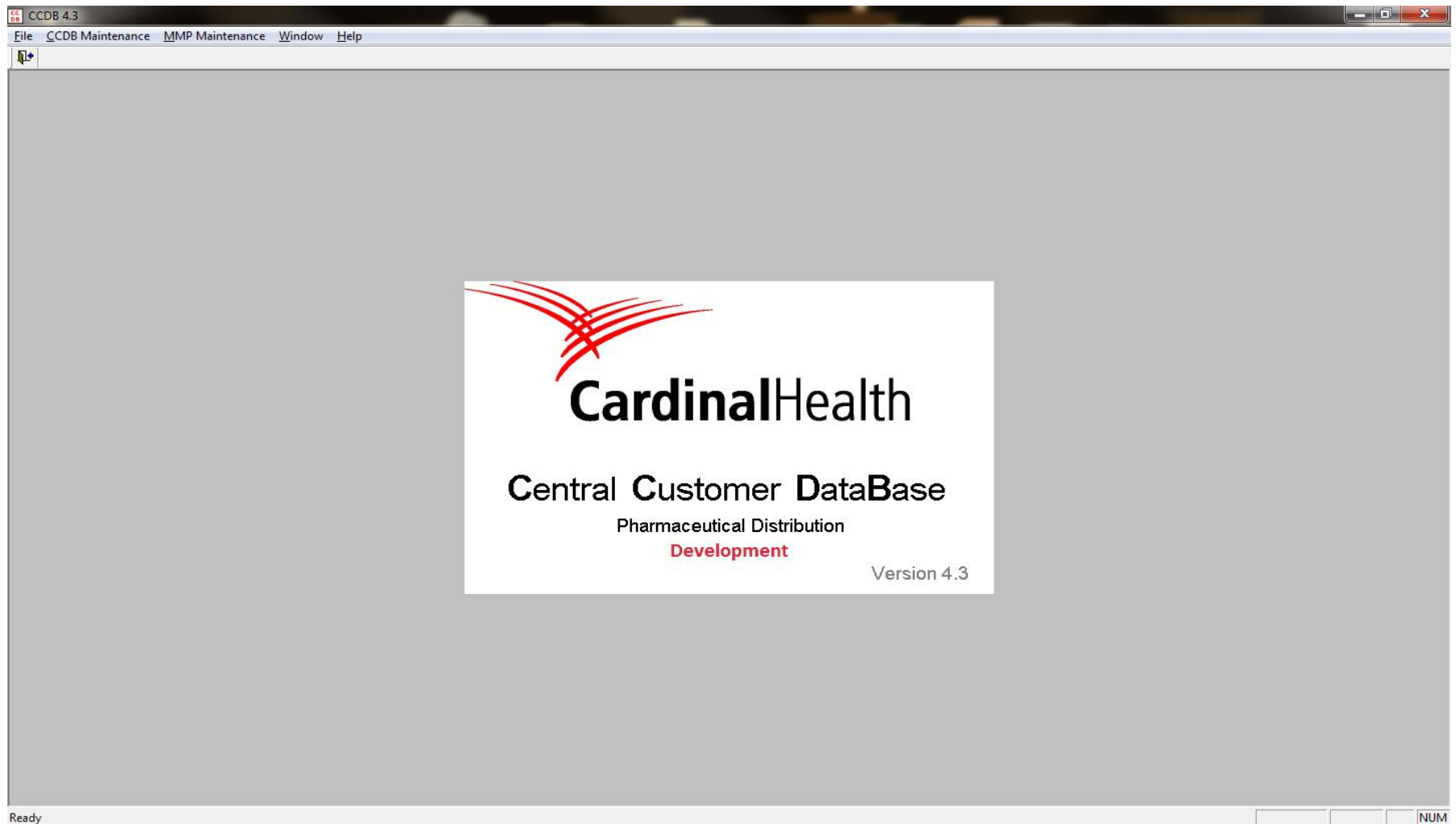
State: Stabilization

- First Project. New field to an existing file and replicated databases. Labor intensive and engagement with other development teams. Test and Production environments. 4-6 hour deployment on Saturday
 - File changes occur after 8PM Saturday and system back and resources are down for maintenance and down time.
- Main – MDI oh the parameters! – File change aided in the application crashing, since UI's contained output parameters based on views
 - Learned the hard way about the sensitivity of recompile at the top level

State: Stabilization

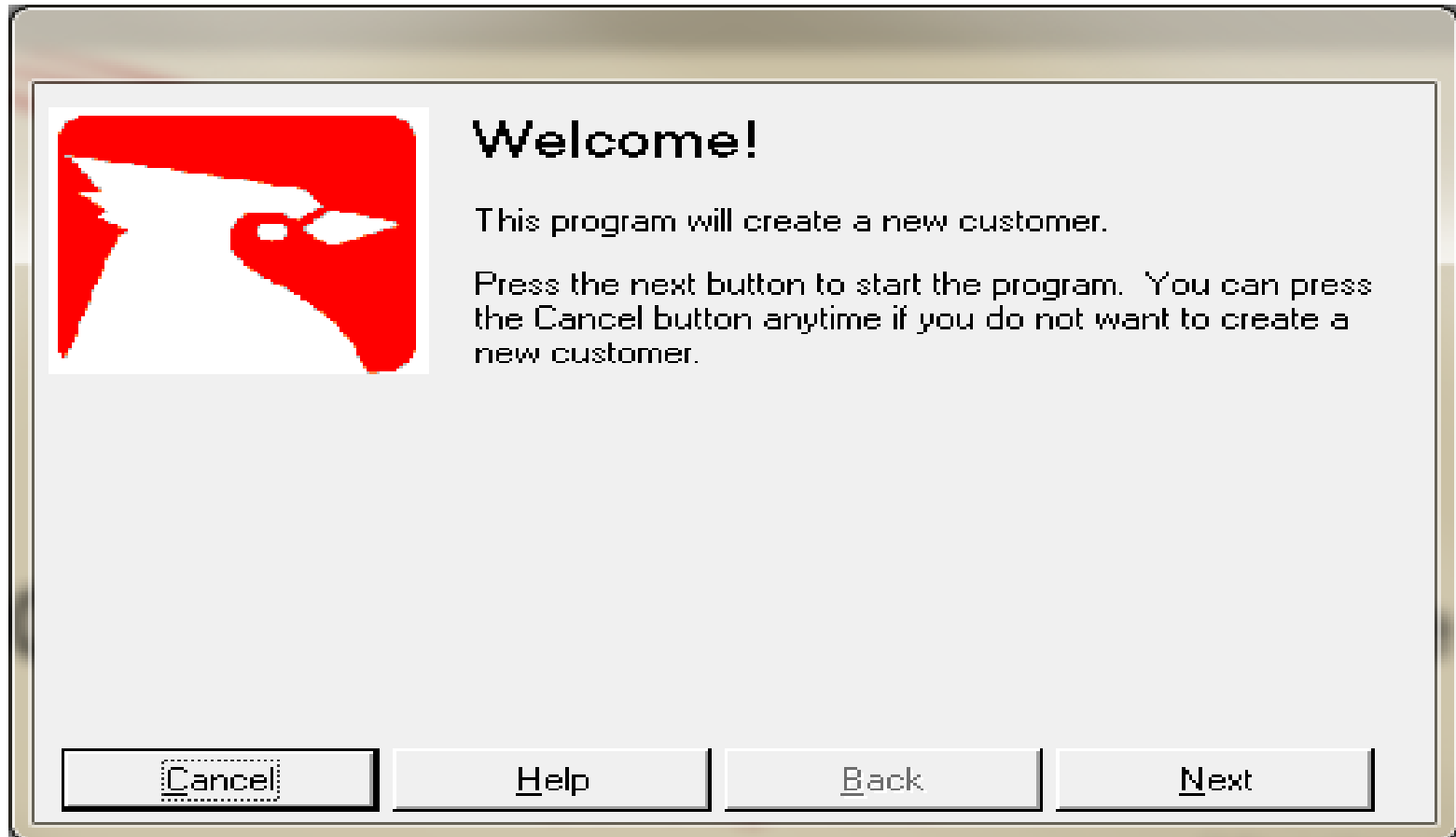
- Turnover default values cause errors. Example that promoted logical files get build over physical file in the development libraries not the test library where the physical file was promoted.
- Moved from the project laggard to the leader in development and promotion of new functionality in application.
 - Projects often involve file changes.
 - Increased application visibility through out organization
- Moved UI from ColdFusion Server and replaced with Plex UI using patterns. Application Integrator to pull in files from I-Series

State: Current



State: Current

- Turnover default values cause errors. Logical files promoted built over physical file in the development libraries not the test library where the physical file was promoted.
 - Override them with only necessary libraries.
 - Technical talent moved on to other duties.
- Application Stable. No outages for 2 years. 4 projects and 10+ Enhancements
- Managed Services. 200++ hours of enhancements across 5 applications.
 - Room to prototype and deliver something new.
 - Web Services to move data to and from within the enterprise?



State: Future

- User's Business Process has changed dramatically over the years.
- Customer Creation from user view point needs to be leaner.
- Additional changes are likely to related to Business Intelligence
- Regulatory issues create changes.
- Big Data, Clean Data and Quality Data
- Business Acquisitions likely to continue.
- Modernization of Data SAP and future application not yet chosen for this Application.

The Team



Questions